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The Romances of Chivalry in Italian Verse. Selections. Edited with Introduction and Notes, by J. D. M. FORD, Professor of Romance Languages in Harvard University, and MARY H. FORD, Instructor in the High School, Danbury, Conn. Henry Holt & Co. New York, 1906. Pp. xxxvii + 657. 8vo.

In the brief Preface to this serious and adequate presentation of a most important as well as brilliant literary genre, the editors modestly hope that the work may be the means of prompting students "to acquaint themselves more fully with the works of the poets to whom they are here introduced." Inasmuch as almost no work of the kind exists at all for English-speaking students, certainly none that either in quality or quantity is comparable with the present volume, it is hardly venturing too much to look forward with some degree of confidence to the fulfilment of the hope of the editors. Moreover, two important objects have constantly been kept in view: first, that of providing the best possible reading matter of the kind for students in schools and colleges; and second, and of still greater importance, that of furnishing material for the student to follow up and investigate for himself one of the very interesting and unique movements in literature.

All this is certainly well worth doing, judging by what has been done during the past twenty-five years on the particular subject itself which forms the basis of the romances of chivalry. Since Francisque Michel published in 1837 his first edition of the Oxford manuscript of the *Chanson de Roland*, at least eight different texts of the entire poem, edited by French and German scholars, have appeared. Since E. J. Delécluze issued in 1845 the first modern French translation of the poem, eighteen French versions in prose and verse, some of the entire poem, others more or less complete, have been printed. Of the Old-French *Chanson de Roland* itself, the corner-stone of the wonderful later literary inventions, Theodor Müller published in 1878 what may be considered a standard edition (the third) of the celebrated Oxford ms. known as Digby 23. This is said with due deference to the scholarly edition of Edmund Stengel, the first volume of which appeared in 1900. Léon Gautier in his *Bibliographie*

des chansons de geste (Paris, 1897) gives 313 numbered titles to the Roland material. Yet these do not comprise all, by any means, for the student is referred to Seelmann's *Bibliographie des altfranzösischen Rolandshiedes* (Heilbronn, 1888), which down to 1887 is practically as complete as human effort can make a work of the kind.

The object of the luminous Introduction to the *Romances of Chivalry* is to trace the development of the Roland material from the early French sources just touched upon down through to the times of the poets of whose works the extracts are given. In supplying this data, the very best sources of information have been drawn upon, namely: Gaston Paris, P. Rajna, A. Gaspary, G. Carducci, and the writers who treat this subject in Gröber's *Grundriss der romanischen Philologie*. Consequently the information is of the most reliable kind.

The poems from which extracts are given are seven in number following each other in chronological order. First come selections from the anonymous poem *Orlando*, discovered by Rajna in a manuscript of the Laurentian Library in 1866. The poem comprises some sixty cantos and was probably first put into verse about 1384, or at any rate, not much later. Nineteen stanzas are given, just enough to give an idea of the antiquity of the poem in style and language as compared with the extracts from the poems which follow. Second, comes: *Il libro volgar intitolato la Spagna* (Venice edition of 1557), one of the most important of the many poems produced towards the end of the fourteenth century. Its authorship is usually attributed to Sostegno di Zanobi, but, as the editors point out, that assumption is extremely dubious. About thirty-one stanzas are given. The idea in giving specimens from these two old poems, which, compared to those that follow are comparatively unknown, is to show their importance in the later development of the romances of chivalry in Italy. Third, Pulci's *Morgante* (G. Volpe edition, Florence, 1900, following the edition of 1489). About two hundred and fifty stanzas have been selected from among twenty-eight cantos, giving quite an idea of the nature of the poem as a whole. Fourth, Bojardo's *Orlando innamorato* (Sonzogno edition, compared with that of A. Panizzi, London, 1830-31), selections from various cantos of parts one and two of the poem, comprising in all

about one hundred and sixty-eight stanzas. Fifth, Bojardo's *Orlando innamorato*, rifatto da Francesco Berni (cf. the Milan 1867 edition), which follows appropriately its predecessor. About forty-eight stanzas are given, enough to enable one to contrast Berni's effort with that of Bojardo, whose poem, it is Gaspari's opinion, "Berni diluted." Sixth, Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* (editions of P. Papini, Florence, 1903, H. Romizi, Milan, 1901, G. Casella, Florence, 1877) followed by : Seventh, Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (cf. Sansoni edition, Florence, 1890). Because of their importance, there can be hardly any question in regard to the propriety of giving the greater part of the space comprised in this volume of nearly seven hundred pages to these two authors. The question is likely to arise to which to assign the more space. The editors have allotted 224 pages to Ariosto, about 896 stanzas ; to Tasso, 147 pages, or about 588 stanzas. In the writer's opinion, the editors have made no mistake in allotting for American students the larger share to Ariosto. His spontaneity, fecundity of invention, and easy style make him a favorite in the class-room. Be the excellence of the *Gerusalemme liberata* what it may, it is, indeed, very great, its artificiality compared with the naturalness of Ariosto's poem produces a no uncertain effect in forming the opinion of the average student as to which of the two poems is the more readable.

The Notes which follow these well-chosen selections from the Italian poets comprise 121 pages. Besides elucidating the difficulties met with in translating, they have the particular merit of emphasizing the human side of the poems by bringing out what most has interested scholars with regard to them. Allusions to Scripture, to Classical and modern authors abound and enable the student to carry out successfully the purpose announced by the editors in the Preface.

Last of all, in this very considerable work of intrinsic merit throughout, comes a well-arranged and quite adequate Bibliography of general works and of special works covering all of the poems of which selections are given. More than one hundred works are mentioned, in itself a valuable contribution to the entire subject.

In giving simply a notice of a volume that of necessity must have taken a great amount of time and labor to compile, the most noticeable factor of all should not be allowed to remain uncommen-

that is the amount of self-sacrifice and devotion to the subject that has made such a book—the only one of its kind now before the school public—a reality. Recent statistics show that there are only about eight colleges in the United States and Canada where there are more than fifteen students beginning Italian. The total number of students pursuing the subject amounts to but a little more than 600. There is no data at hand regarding the number of students pursuing Italian in second or third year courses. The above facts, however, indicate clearly how few such students are. Consequently, all the more disinterested and admirable in every way must be the enterprise of both editors and publisher that have made possible the appearance of so valuable a work.

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Selections from Standard French Authors. By O. G. GUERLAC. Boston, Ginn & Company.

The idea of this book is a good one. Where a French class in college can devote only a short time to the language, to give them some extracts from the great writers cannot but be useful. In the present instance, however, the idea has not been well carried out, as I think the following will show.

In the first place, the selection of authors seems capricious. It is hard to see why, in making selections from a limited number of "standard" French authors, we should include such names as Brueys and Palaprat (of whom the editor himself says that they are almost forgotten), Boursault, Rivarol, and Vauvenargues, and omit such names as About, Dumas, Lamartine, de Musset, and Sand, not to speak of Corneille and Racine.

In the second place, the selections are not representative. From Bernardin de Saint-Pierre we have a little anecdote of nineteen lines containing nothing that is characteristic of Saint-Pierre. Molière is represented by an extract from *Don Juan*, one of his less important plays and the extract is, moreover, so short as to be almost unintelligible, breaking off as it does in the middle of a scene.

Some of the details, too, need revision. For example :